

Letter from Edward E. Hale to Alexander Graham Bell, December 14, 1900

FROM EDWARD E. HALE. 39 Highland St. Roxbury, Mass. Dec. 14, 1900. My dear Mr. Bell:—

Our good friend Mrs. Chamberlin has shown me your letter to her.

I have told her that it seems to me wise, from end to end, with the single exception of its suggestion of my name as president of the National society.

I am amazed—I am distressed—at the statistical statements which your study of the census enables you to make. It is clear that whatever is undertaken must be undertaken with a view of this.

I am quite ready to join in any effort for the national organisation. But it is absolutely impossible that I should appear as President or any officer in such an organisation. I would say to you personally that the proper President is Mr. Graham Bell and I beg you to reconsider your statement to her that you cannot act in that way.

I do not however, consider it very important that the President should be a person of national reputation at the present time. If eight or ten of us having paid some attention to the matter think that Mrs. Chamberlin is the proper President, it will answer exactly as well. What I mean is that a few of the right people can give character to the movement and then the selection of officers could be made with reference merely to their efficiency and fitness.

The detail of Helen Keller's life becomes absolutely insignificant in the presence of such a national necessity. Her friends will take care of her, while the country is aroused to the proper care of a thousand other such unfortunates.

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Always truly yours, Edw. E. Hale